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and better things. Generally speaking, however, the album sounds amateurish, with feeble, undermixed vocals. Exceptions are the Motels, who've since signed with Capitol Records, and the Dogs.

The Dils, much maligned because of their controversial politics (they profess to be Socialists or something) contribute "Pogo's" toughest, most authoritative track with "Mr. Big." The short-lived, infamous Vom, fronted by rock critic Richard Meltzer, was intended as parody, but actually rocks pretty well. Their cut, "I'm in Love With Your Mom" isn't bad at all. Generally speaking though, "Pogo's" musical moments are outnumbered by its comic ones, making it for archivists only.

"TOOTH AND NAIL." Various artists. Upsetter. UP WR 1&2.

Like the Eno-produced "No New York" album, "Tooth and Nail" represents an extremist faction. The L.A. groups here aren't as precociously arty as those on "No New York," but they do occasionally come off as similarly overambitious and heavy-handed. This is a relentlessly grim LP about the suburban dream gone haywire.

Included are the Controllers, a meat-and-potatoes guitar trio who offer the album's only lighthearted moment with a sinewy version of "Jezebel," an old Ricky Ricardo showstopper. The Flesheaters, whose guiding light Chris Dejardins produced this album, contribute three puzzling tracks. Dejardins is a provocative lyricist, but his convulsive vocal style makes it impossible to decipher what he's saying.

Negative Trend offers one of the album's peak moments with a cut called "Mercenaries." Vocalist Rik L. Rik hurtles through the song like a screaming kamikaze bent on pillage and plunder. It's unlikely, however, that Rik has much first-hand knowledge of the mercenary business, so the song has a somewhat false ring despite the inspired performance. The Germs, undisputed local masters of the Iggy Pop "Hurt-Yourself" school of music, offer a wickedly poetic track called "Manimal." This group makes messy, menacing music, but they're too disturbingly convincing to be ignored. □

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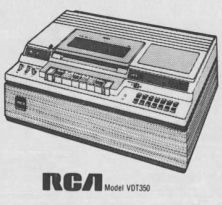
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